



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## PROJECT CEASEFIRE

### **U.S. ATTORNEY INDICTS 700<sup>TH</sup> DEFENDANT FOR ILLEGAL FIREARM**

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that 13 area residents were indicted by a federal grand jury today, in separate and unrelated cases, for illegally possessing firearms. Today's indictments, Graves said, are part of Project Ceasefire and bring the total number of defendants charged under the program above the 700 mark.

"Our focus remains on prosecuting repeat offenders who make the decision to illegally possess firearms," Graves said. "Since being sworn in as U.S. Attorney, prosecuting anti-gun crime cases has been one of my top priorities for the simple reason that removing guns from the hands of felons reduces the likelihood they will commit additional violent crimes down the road."

Project Ceasefire was launched in October 1999 and is a cooperative initiative by federal, state and local law enforcement, including the Kansas City Crime Commission, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and many other law enforcement agencies and state prosecutors across the District. The program targets for federal prosecution persons who unlawfully use or possess firearms and is part of the national Project Safe Neighborhoods program.

Project Ceasefire has resulted in federal charges against 705 defendants who illegally possess firearms, which is an average of more than 140 indictments each year. The program also has resulted in convictions against 601 of those defendants so far, including 571 who pleaded guilty and 30 who were convicted at trial. A total of 543 of the 601 convicted defendants have been sentenced, and 58 currently await sentencing hearings. During 2004, Project Ceasefire has charged 169 defendants, convicted 144 and sentenced 154.

\* **Nehemiah Robinson, Jr.**, 41, of Kansas City, was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Robinson** was in possession of an Omega .32-caliber revolver on March 27, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Robinson** has six criminal felony convictions for burglary, two criminal felony convictions for theft and a criminal felony conviction for possession of stolen property.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rudolph R. Rhodes, IV. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Earl J. Whitmire**, 44, of Kansas City, was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Whitmire** was in possession of a Smith and Wesson .357-caliber Magnum revolver on Oct. 1, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Whitmire** has a total of 10 criminal felony convictions, including convictions for the sale of PCP, crack cocaine and marijuana.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David A. Barnes. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Christopher J. Morris**, 33, of Blue Springs, Mo., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Morris** was in possession of a Mossberg 20-gauge shotgun on May 14, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Morris** has a total of 17 criminal felony convictions, including convictions for burglary, stealing and receiving stolen property.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Rudolph R. Rhodes, IV. It was investigated by the Booneville, Mo., Police Department, the Bunceton, Mo., Police Department, the Lafayette County, Mo., Sheriff's Department, the Independence, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Sean K. Owens**, 39, of St. Joseph, Mo., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Owens** was in possession of a Mossberg 12-gauge shotgun on Sept. 6, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Owens** has a 1998 criminal felony conviction for unlawful use of a weapon and a 2000 criminal felony conviction for driving while intoxicated.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Daniel M. Nelson. It was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Duane C. Carter**, 21, of Kansas City, Mo., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Carter** was in possession of a Sturm Ruger 9 mm semi-automatic pistol on May 18, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Carter** has two 2003 criminal felony convictions for trafficking drugs.

This case is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Stefan C. Hughes. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Walter E. Richardson**, 55, of Harrisonville, Mo., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of three firearms.

The federal indictment alleges that **Richardson** was in possession of a Glock .40-caliber semi-automatic pistol, a Smith and Wesson 12-gauge shotgun and a Romarm/Cugir rifle on Nov. 15, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Richardson** has a 1996 criminal felony conviction for driving while intoxicated and two 1995 criminal felony convictions for unlawful use of a weapon and driving while intoxicated.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jess E. Michaelsen. It was investigated by the Lee's Summit, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Donald W. Bellos**, 26, of Excelsior Springs, Mo., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of nine firearms.

The federal indictment alleges that **Bellos** was in possession of a Browning 10-gauge shotgun, two Browning 12-gauge shotguns, a Remington .222-caliber rifle, a Remington 12-gauge shotgun, a Remington 30-06 rifle, an American Arms 20-gauge shotgun, a Weatherby .22-caliber rifle and a Winchester 12-gauge shotgun on June 8, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Bellos** has a 2002 criminal felony conviction for possession of a controlled substance and a 1998 criminal felony conviction for creating a controlled substance.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David A. Barnes. It was investigated by the Lee's Summit, Mo., Police Department, the Independence, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Christopher Quezada**, 20, a Mexican national living in Gladstone, Mo., was charged in a two-count indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with two firearms violations.

Count One of the federal indictment alleges that **Quezada** was an illegal alien in possession of a Breda Meccanica Bresciana 12-gauge shotgun on Nov. 30, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any illegal alien to be in possession of any firearm.

Count Two of the federal indictment alleges that **Quezada** was also a felon in possession of a firearm on Nov. 30, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Quezada** has a 2004 criminal felony conviction for theft.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jess E. Michaelsen. It was investigated by the Clay County, Mo., Sheriff's Department and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

\* **Richard W. Kinney**, 23, of Kansas City, Mo., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Kinney** was in possession of a Lorcin .380-caliber semi-automatic pistol on Oct. 8, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who has been convicted of a felony to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Kinney** has a 2000 criminal felony conviction for attempted stealing.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David A. Barnes. It was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Anthony E. Long**, 34, of Blue Springs, Mo., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with illegally possessing a firearm while also under a restraining order.

The federal indictment alleges that **Long** was in possession of a High Standard .22 caliber revolver on Oct. 19, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for anyone who is the subject of a court restraining order to be in possession of any firearm.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Daniel M. Nelson. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **David P. Henry**, 54, of Houma, La., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being an unlawful user of a controlled substance in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Henry** was in possession of a Cobra Enterprises .22-

caliber pistol on July 17, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any addict or user of a controlled substance to be in possession of a firearm. The indictment alleges that **Henry** was an unlawful user of methamphetamine when he was found in possession of the firearm.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David A. Barnes. It was investigated by the Independence, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Jeremy D. Knowles**, 26, of Kansas City, Mo., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being an unlawful user of a controlled substance in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Knowles** was in possession of a Smith and Wesson .38-caliber revolver on Nov. 22, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any addict or user of a controlled substance to be in possession of a firearm. The indictment alleges that **Knowles** was an unlawful user of methamphetamine when he was found in possession of the firearm.

This case is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Stefan C. Hughes. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Jeffrey W. Stillwell**, 37, of Blue Springs, Mo., was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City with being an unlawful user of a controlled substance in possession of a firearm.

The federal indictment alleges that **Stillwell** was in possession of a Ruger .45-calibery pistol on July 31, 2004. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any addict or user of a controlled substance to be in possession of a firearm. The indictment alleges that **Stillwell** was an unlawful user of methamphetamine when he was found in possession of the firearm.

This case is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Stefan C. Hughes. It was investigated by the Independence, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Graves cautioned that the charges contained in these indictments are simply accusations and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

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